

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 00491 200901Z
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TAGS: SOPN, KS, US
SUBJ: PRESIDENT PAK'S JAN 18 NEW YEAR'S PRESS CONFERENCE

REF: SEOUL 439 (DTG 181834Z JAN 78)

SUMMARY: OBSERVATIONS FOLLOW ON PRESIDENT'S PRESS CONFERENCE.
BASIC THEMES OF ALL RECENT SPEECHES, NAMELY, SELF-RELIANCE,
NATIONAL UNITY, AND ECONOMIC GROWTH STRESSED. LONG-TIME
OBSERVERS NOTED NO MAJOR CHANGES IN POLICY. TONE WAS CONFI-
DENT AND FORWARD-LOOKING. END SUMMARY.

1. GENERAL. IN INTRODUCTORY REMARKS, PAK LISTED THREE BASIC
GOVERNMENT POLICIES FOR COMING YEAR: (1) ENHANCEMENT OF
SELF-RELIANCE AND STRENGTHENING OF NATIONAL UNITY; (2)
MAINTENANCE OF ECONOMIC STABILITY AND GROWTH; (3) UP-GRADING
OF NATIONAL DEFENSE AND "POSTURE OF ALL-OUT SECUIRY".

2. SECURITY. PAK MADE CLEAR "THE SUBJECT OF SECURITY
BELONGS ON AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT LEVEL FROM OTHER ISSUES".
PAK CAUTIONED AGAINST CATERING TO POPULAR SENTIMENT
WHEN IT COMES TO SECUIRY. RECENT CALLS FOR CHANGES IN
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PAGE 02 SEOUL 00491 200901Z

HOMELAND RESERVE FORCE, CIVIL DEFENSE CORPS AND LENGTH
OF MILITARY SERVICE WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. PAK DETAILED
DEVELOPMENT OF DOMESTIC DEFENSE INDUSTRIES, CLAIMING
THAT BY 1981. ROK WILL BE ABLE TO MEET ALL REQUIREMENTS
OF THE ARMED FORCS WITH DOMESTICALLY PRODUCED MATERIALS.
HE EMPHASIZED THE ACCUMULATION OF TECHNOLOGY WHICH WILL
LEAD TO PRODUCTION OF "HIGHLY SOPHISTICATED ELECTRONIC

EQUIPMENT AND AIRPLANES, IN THE MIDDLE OF THE 1980'S" NATIONAL SECURITY WILL CONTINUE TO BE LINKED WITH THE US WHILE COMPENSATORY MEASURE IMPLEMENTATION TAKES PLACE, BUT AS IN PREVIOUS SPEECHES, PAK STRESSED NECESSITY FOR INDEPENDENT DEFENSE POSTURE - "THE TIME HAS GONE WHEN (WE) COULD COUNT ON OTHERS FOR THE DEFENSE OF OUR COUNTRY. THERE IS NO QUESTION ABOUT THAT. IT IS NO LONGER POSSIBLE TO DEPEND UPON OTHERS FOR OUR OWN NATIONAL DEFENSE."

3. DOMESTIC POLITICS. THIS SECTION IS NOTEWORTHY FOR WHAT WAS NOT COVERED, I.E., MEASURES ADDRESSED BY OPPOSITION - HUMAN RIGHTS, FREE PRESS, AND DEVELOPMENT OF DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM. PAK NOTED IN PASSING SOME OPPOSITION TO YUSIN SYSTEM STILL EXISTS, BUT FIVE YEARS OF EXPERIENCE WITH THE SYSTEM HAVE CONFIRMED ITS APPROPRIATENESS, AND THEREFORE IT WILL BE CONTINUED.

4. ECONOMIC POLICY. "IN SHORT WE HAVE NOW ACHIEVED THE LONG-CHERISHED SELF-RELIANT ECONOMY." AFTER REVIEWING ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF ECONOMY IN 1977, PAK DETAILED PLANS FOR CONTINUED GROWTH IN EACH SECTOR OF ECONOMY. FOUR PRIMARY ECONOMIC GOALS: (1) EXPAND PRIVATE INVESTMENT AND PROMOTE MANPOWER/TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT; (2) INCREASE INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS OF INDUSTRY; (3) BALANCED DEVELOPMENT TO PROTECT MEDIUM AND SMALL INDUSTRIES; AND (4) LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 SEOUL 00491 200901Z

STABILIZATION OF PRICES AND EXPANDED SAVINGS.

5. SOCIAL PROGRAMS. PAK EXPANDED UPON HIS PREPARED TEXT WHICH DEALT WITH ROUTINE LISTING OF VARIOUS SOCIAL SERVICES PLANNED FOR 1978. RESPONDING TO QUESTION ON SAEMAUL UNDONG, PRESIDENT DEPARTED FOR OVER TEN MINUTES TO CALL ATTENTION TO THE HARD WORKING CONDITIONS OF BUS GIRLS AND URGED EVERYONE TO WORK TOGETHER FOR BETTER BUS SERVICE. IT WAS THIS TYPE OF SPONTANEOUS ELABORATION WHICH MADE FOR SUCH LENGTHY TREATMENT OF HIS VIEWS ON IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE.

6. FOREIGN RELATIONS. IN ADDITION TO SPECIFIC POINTS NOTED IN REFTTEL, PAK THEORIZED THAT "SECRET" OF ROK'S SUCCESSFUL FOREIGN POLICY RECENTLY LIES IN THE FOLLOWING: (1) NATIONAL STRENGTH ESSENTIAL - PAK NOTED TRENDS SUGGEST IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES CAN BE TRANSCENDED WHEN THERE IS OPPORTUNITY FOR PRACTICAL ECONOMIC GAIN; (2) ACTING IN "GOOD FAITH" INTERNATIONALLY - BY THIS, PAK APPARENTLY MEANS TO CONTRAST ROK DIPLOMACY WITH THAT OF DPRK, STRUNG BY ITS SERIES OF DIPLOMATIC BLUNDERS.

7. COMMENT: DESPITE A VOICE WEAKENED BY A RECENT
BOUT WITH LARYNGITIS, THE PRESIDENT PROJECTED A MOST
POSITIVE VIEW OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AND AN OPTIMISTIC
VISION OF THE FUTURE. PLAYING TO INCREASING NATIONALIST
SENTIMENT, HE STRESSED THROUGHOUT THE ABILITY OF THE
COUNTRY AND ITS PEOPLE TO ASSUME CONTROL OF THEIR OWN
DESTINY IN WORLD AFFAIRS, AS IS CUSTOMARY, HE DEVOTED
MAJOR PORTION OF HIS PRESS CONFERENCE TO DISCUSSION
OF HOW LIFE OF THE AVERAGE KOREAN WOULD BE IMPROVED.
WHILE CONTAINING NO NEW DEPARTURES OR POLITICAL MODI-
FICATION AS HOPED FOR, BY OPPOSITION PARTY, THE
PRESIDENT PLAYED ON ALL OTHER RECENT ASPECTS WHICH
WOULD ELICIT PUBLIC SUPPORT.

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PAGE 04 SEOUL 00491 200901Z

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